/4 cont./

At the present time the family concept of the woman is changing because of the conduct of mestizo and even pure Indian women brought about by changes in their economic situation and by contact with whites. Gradually, the traditional organization of the marriage payment and fidelity based on the payment is being broken down, because it is the women themselves and not their relatives who receive the payment, and for their activities as prostitutes. The phenomenon is noted not only in the centers of the interior which have contacts with whites and Negroes -- principally traders and civil authorities -- but also and especially in Maracaibo and some of the towns in the department of Magdalena, to which they have been obliged to emigrate. However, they maintain the family concept of mutual assistance and share their income with their close relatives, not as before in the form of the marriage payment but as income earned in the sex market.

Prenatal care and birth. A woman learns that she is pregnant when she feels a loss of appetite and repugnance for food. The later disappearance of the menstrual period confirms the suspicion, and she immediately sees to it that her husband is informed of the event, so that he may know of his coming fatherhood. Also, in the case where she has had extramarital relations in the absence of the husband, the woman, when she feels these early symptoms of pregnancy, goes in search of him, cohabits with him, and later can tell him of her condition, thus avoiding possible later suspicions. From the time of the ending of the first menstrual period, she begins to count the months, and she expects delivery after the eighth month.

Before the arrival of a child, the woman complies with established rules intended to avoid a lengthy and difficult delivery as well as to safeguard the new arrival from sickness which would affect his normal mental and physical well-being. Included in these prescriptions are to be found some of useful and practical value and others with a marked magic aspect. These magic observances generally affect both parents, although some only refer to the woman, /5/ others exclusively to the man (1).

/101 cont./

§39 In the cases that we have described, as in that of abduction,
583 the relatives of the girl oblige the seducer to marry by paying the stipulated price, or to pay an amount they arrive at for the abuse committed. If neither of these alternatives is complied with, the enmity of the two groups involved becomes so bitter that war ensues. /102/

Marriage by adultery. When a woman commits adultery
• §37 and the case is known, attempts are made to settle the matter
583 legally: the lover is obliged by the maternal relatives to pay what is claimed by the legitimate husband, or to pay to them the value of a usual marriage, in which case the woman involved on the litigation becomes his lawful wife, according to Guajiro law.

At the present time this custom, which previously used to end with the death of the lover, the husband, or of both, since the husband tried to solve the problem in this way in spite of future consequences, is now dying out due to the emigration of the men and the growing prostitution among the women, both in and outside the peninsula, for the many reasons already seen.

Marriage of female bond servants and slaves. Although this
583 aspect will be treated fully in the chapter headed Slavery and
587 Bond Service, we would like to present it, if only summarily, in this chapter so as not to disturb the order of the ideas we are tracing.

The women and children taken prisoners in the wars which strong clan groups declare on weak ones when these have caused the death of one of their members enter into the state of slavery. This means that the all-powerful will of their owner may be imposed on every act of their lives, even up to his being able to kill them without possibility of claim, since their relatives who would be the claimants have been slaughtered or dispersed.

In this way adult women and girl slaves may be sold, and in effect are, especially to be taken to Curaçao, Trinidad, etc.; they may be given away to their owners' relatives, or used in domestic service. If the master of a woman slave wishes to

/117 cont./

583 978 these or have been brutally kicked or beaten with sticks or dragged by their hair, etc. The only sanction, the claim made by the woman's family, is frequently not made, and these episodes end in one of two ways: First, with the death of the woman, in which case her husband makes some payment, under pressure of popular opinion of outsiders or of his own relatives, who refuse to admit into their midst a criminal with no justifiable motive, or because of the possible connections and alliances which his wife's relatives may be able to make in an extreme case like this. Second, with the suicide of the woman, since she hangs herself, blind with pain, anger, and mental suffering, and in order that the blame of her death may fall on her husband. This solution is tragic and very common, and as a result when a husband has murdered his wife, he tries to make it look like suicide. In Manaure we witnessed one of these cases, where the death was made to appear to be suicide by hanging, when the real cause of the woman's death was a kick in the stomach. Among the information we gathered in a reference to a similar case in Lower La Guajira, in which the cause of death was discovered only when the relatives of the woman washed her body before embowding it, as is the custom in La Guajira.

583 837 A fourth cause of ill-treatment is suspected or proven unfaithfulness on the part of the woman; the resentment appears when the man gets drunk or when the woman disobeys or gives some reason for complaint. He says in this case: "You didn't obey me because what I order is not ordered by so-and-so" (here he uses the name of her lover if he knows it) or "by the man who has taken my place" (if he does not know or only suspects it.) Frequently, he adds insults and blows. In these cases of suspicion or proof of infidelity, the lack of understanding between the couple increases and the ill-treatment extends itself to the children, whose paternity the father is beginning to doubt. At times, although the infidelity has been clearly proved, the man does not leave his wife nor apply the corresponding legislation, because he loves her and

/117 cont./

583 837 prefers to pardon her, but the offense he has received shows itself at times in aggressive action and ill-treatment, for which he is sorry later, as we have said.

When suspicion does not reach the proportions of reality, the married life of the couple is naturally less calm than it was. The husband tries to obtain proofs at all costs /118/ and lives a life of constant alertness, trying to induce his wife to confess and looking for an opportunity to catch her infraganti (for further explanation see the section Adultery in this chapter).

593 As a fifth cause of marital ill-treatment one may cite the woman's deficient compliance with the obligations she is supposed to undertake, which may result from two reasons: First, the husband may have paid a low price for her when he made the marriage payment arrangements; second, she may have been forced by her relatives to marry a man she did not like at a time when she was in love with another man. If the husband knows of this situation, he makes it a basis for his insults, refers to it as the palpable cause of her lack of attention to him and to the management of her home. He will say, for example: "You don't want to attend to me because I am not that so-and-so, whom you used to love so much. Of course you would be glad to serve and obey him in everything. But you will have to serve and attend to me, although you dont's like it, because you are my wife and not his."

On occasion it is disobedience of the husband's prohibitive orders which lead to his attack. He tells his wife, for instance, not to leave the house, and she in spite of this leaves the house and goes visiting somewhere. Then the Guajiro, believing his rights are being flouted, punishes and mistreats the woman in order to force her to submit to his every wish, which is to him a symbol of his manhood.

595 Relations between co-wives. Life between the different wives of a man fluctuates between genuine comradeship and an infernal struggle.

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He has the best livestock on her land; it is she who is really considered as his main wife, who represents him in rank, and whose children belong to a higher group than the rest. And it is to her home and not to that of any of his other wives that the Guajiro takes his friends when he owes them some attention, if they are people of a status equal or superior to his own.

She adopts an attitude of simulated indifference before society with regard to the polygamy of her husband. She does not comment on the matter or associate with the others, although in the lower classes she is frequently obliged to live with them, in which case she will tenaciously defend her privileges.

Also, the Guajiro man at the present time marries by the Catholic rite but later contracts other marriages under the Guajiro system. In these cases it is not unusual for the first wife to be unaware of his subsequent marriage, since the husband hides it, but she may also get to hear of it because of the general practice of selling information among some women. In such a situation she maintains a reserved attitude before outsiders, and although she really recognizes the importance of such acts, she behaves as though her husband's later marriage means nothing in her life; she considers such things as misdoings on her husband's part and regards other wives, even those legally bought, as concubines and their children as having the illegitimate standing they would have in our society.

As the acquisition of each new wife may bother the previous ones, he does not insist that they attend the marriage ceremony, unless they are pleased about it because the new wife is an intimate friend or a sister.

Adultery. We have seen in this chapter that the man's first reaction to knowledge of his wife's adultery is to kill /124/ her lover and bring on all the consequences this death may entail or, as an alternative, to demand indemnification from his wife's maternal relatives for the offense suffered. However, when the man cares very much for his wife, he may forgive her after a terrible quarrel. It can happen that she may go away for some time with another man, and her husband will later live with her

/124 cont./

837 again without any claim whatever. They may live together peacefully again without the man's making any reproaches, /at least/ when he is not drunk.

The causes which have extended the problem of adultery, together with prostitution, are very diverse and have made the oly type of law, already described, ineffective to a certain degree. Because in modern times infidelity does not occupy its former important place in the mind of the Guajiro; cases of it multiply and the previous scruple of regarding it as an antisocial act is disappearing. The growing emigration of men to Venezuela in search of work, which leaves women abandoned for long periods; the contact of women with other cultures which have different ideas about such matters; the economic misery accentuated by the long summers; the opportunity to earn a little money through extramarital relations, which helps to sustain them; the breaking up of native social institutions; and the easy ways that the guilty parties now have of escaping the consequences of their actions are all new causes, which together with the traditional ones which have led the Guajiro woman to break the social principle of marital fidelity -- such as being forced into a marriage when in love with another man; the lack of control and of sexual satisfaction resulting from one man's being permitted to have a great number of women -- all these causes tend to increase the problem of adultery now more than before, since in the old days the law was followed to the letter in spite of the social convulsions which its application might provoke.

[SP3] The attitude of a man who suspects his wife of infidelity is always one of violence, because he feels himself ostensibly defrauded; from then on he becomes a tyrant to his wife and takes advantage of every opportunity to hurt her, insult her, and pour scorn on her. The woman in such cases limits herself to emphatically and constantly denying her guilt and adopting the position of one unjustly accused. The testimony of someone who has surprised her in the act is necessary to make her

/124 cont./

837 confess and admit her guilt. Her conduct when she commits
● adultery /125/ is always under cover. Thus, if during a long absence of her husband she has had relations with another man and, her menstrual period failing to appear, she fears she is pregnant, she goes to look for her husband on the pretext of taking a present and lives with him in order to supply herself with an alibi. As the pregnancy advances she makes her husband believe that it originated on that occasion, thus defending herself from the possible consequences of her infidelity. The husband, who does not bother much about dates, accepts the alibi as a fact. However, certain cases are cited in which the man has later become aware of the deception, usually from observing a marked likeness the child bears to the real father. Then he concentrates on making his wife confess her offense or on trying to prove it himself. If she confesses, then he invokes the law covering adultery; if she does not, there is nothing he can do legally, but he delights in throwing his suspicions in her face; he gets drunk with his friends and sings insulting and offensive songs to her; he treats her badly, hitting her on any pretext. As for the child whose paternity he doubts, he dislikes it, barely tolerating its presence and waiting until it grows up to see if the physical likeness becomes clearer so that he can take advantage of it as decisive proof against his wife and demand the prescribed payment. He spies on her every movement. He leaves the house declaring that he is going to be away a long time and returns when least expected, or he hides and watches the movements of his wife when she goes out to get water, firewood, etc., and follows her tracks until at times he discovers the place she meets her lover, and
837 if he finds there the proofs of infidelity he seeks and the tracks
687 of the lover, he goes home hurriedly and brings his wife to the spot to confront her with everything and to oblige her by force of blows to confess. Sometimes he manages to catch the guilty couple together, and in the exaltation of his jealousy he kills both the woman and her lover. Sometimes the lover manages to escape, and at other times, after a furious fight, they both

/125 cont./

837 die, which complicates the situation gravely, because it brings
484 the three clan groups into the picture: the woman's, the man's, and the lover's. In such cases, the payment usually falls on the group weakest both socially and economically, even though it may have lost one of its members, is least to blame, or has acted only in self-defense. If the lover is of low standing and dies, his relatives must pay the husband and the wife's relatives the amount established.

586 If in any case of adultery the man possesses sufficient proof
837 to accuse his wife, he can demand from her maternal relatives the return of the purchase price plus the indemnity considered just /126/ and the children they have had; if, on the other hand, the relatives can prove that before the adultery the man mistreated her, neither the payment nor the indemnity are justified, and with the return of one of the children of the marriage to the man, the whole matter is closed. At the same time the man loses his right to the woman, this being the only case of true dissolution of marriage.

Dissolution of marriage. A Guajiro marriage can, in a way,
586 be considered indissoluble. The woman who is bought according to the law of La Guajira is considered as the husband's personal property, property assured by the girl's relatives, who have received payment for her, and this restrains the girl from behaving in any way different from the traditional.

Proved adultery can be the cause of disuniting the pair, as we have just seen. In such a case, the offended husband demands the return of the payment made when he bought his wife, with which the tie is considered broken and the woman may abandon the home and return to her kin, losing the right to keep her children, who are of her blood and her family but in this case pass into the possession of the husband.

The lover, who cannot consider himself free of responsibility for the problem he has created, becomes, voluntarily or involuntarily, by the payment which he has to make to the woman's relatives, the husband of the woman accused of adultery.

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
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sider themselves entitled to the female slaves. The owner, however, is bound to give a slave enough food from his own kitchen or to provide maize or other raw ingredients for him or her to cook. He must also provide a male slave with a wife, either giving him a female slave or buying a girl for him from some poor clan for ten goats. The state of slavery is hereditary; thus the children of slaves belong to the owner of their parents. If the owner of a male slave should buy a poor free girl to make him a wife, her children will be free, since relationship is reckoned on the female side. If a free man pays a bride-price for a slave, she becomes free; but if he merely buys her for a house-slave she remains a slave. Male slaves are set to work in the fields or with the herds. Female slaves perform domestic occupations. Sometimes a female slave becomes nurse to the owner's children. The laws of Guajira hospitality require that the master of a house place a female slave at his guests' disposal for the night.

The Indians, of course, have the right to punish their slaves, but the chastisement is seldom excessive. Slaves are treated as superior domestic animals, or perhaps I ought to say, as we treat domestic animals, for the Creoles, the Indians' neighbours, are not animal-lovers. Naturally there are cruel Indians too. The monks once came across a poor little slave girl out in the wilds. Her hands were so badly burned that she could not use them. She had been trying to keep herself alive by gnawing at cactus with her mouth. They took her back with them. It transpired that her mistress had lost her temper with her, thrust her hands into the fire and then driven her away.

The Indians make a distinction between slaves taken in war, who are their master's property, and dependent workers. These latter have to do what their master tells them, but he does not dispose of their persons. I called them slave-workers. They can be sold, but in theory it is only their labour that is transferred.

In times of distress the poor not infrequently have to get rid of members of the family who are unable to contribute to their own support, and this they do by selling them. This

8:Armstrong & Métraux E-4 (no date) 1948
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586 minus an amount considered equivalent for the sexual right he had exer-
[845 cised. If a woman dies in her first childbirth the husband may demand
583 the full return of the bride price (Simons, 1885, p. 792, however, states that the wife's relatives demand compensation from the husband).
586 Adultery entails divorce with full return of the bride price. It rarely
● 837 occurs, however, as the wife will be treated badly by her own relatives.
587 At his death a man's wives are inherited by his brother, and next by his
768 sister's sons; the women may avoid this by making a payment equivalent
184 to their bride price. If he is of the Catholic faith his children may claim to be his legal heirs, which leads to conflict with the maternal nephews. (See Social Organization, p. 374.)

562 The influence of women in political affairs is sometimes noticeable.
622 There are cases of female chiefs, and women are respected enough so as to be able to intervene and stop brawls.

764 **Death.**—Funerals are accompanied by festivities which last days or even
[55 weeks, according to the wealth of the family. There are some differences
184 in the funeral ceremonies which are apparently associated with the particular sibs. These funeral feasts afford the best opportunity for display of wealth, and more than 1,000 head of livestock may be butchered. Every mourner who comes to the feast contributes animals for slaughter and continues to do so as long as he cares to remain. After the mourning period, marked by weeping and lamenting interspersed with drinking and feasting, the corpse, which has lain in a hammock slung from the rafters,
[787 is sewn up in hides by the women (men may not touch a dead body) and carried to the cemetery of the tribe. For a year or so, the body may be temporarily consigned to a shallow grave marked by a pile of stones. Food and drink are often placed in the grave, and, if the deceased had been
764 a warrior, his bows and arrows are put in. A year or two later the bones
765 are exhumed and reburied in a large urn. The exhumation is generally done at night and is accompanied by a feast. The remains are carried in a funeral procession to the dead person's birthplace, where they are buried in the family's own cemetery. The funeral urn is placed in a vertical position with the narrow neck of the jar protruding above ground to permit the free entry and exit of the spirit and to allow the remains of other members of the family to be added from time to time. A cactus hedge surrounds the cemetery, and in wet weather half a calabash is placed over the opening of each jar to keep out the rain. Whenever two relatives of a recently deceased person meet, they bow to the ground, shouting and groaning, for several minutes. (For a slightly different account of the burial of a rich man, see Simons, 1885, p. 792.)

751 If a person is stricken with smallpox the whole tribe moves away, only
766 the family of the sick person remaining. When the death occurs they bury the body below the floor and burn the hut over the grave.